

**I Claim:**

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- 1 . 1. An apparatus for providing at least one item of value in cooperation with operation of  
2 a companion device; said companion device delivering at least one first product to a  
3 user; the apparatus comprising:  
4 (a) a control means for controlling said providing;  
5 (b) a providing means for effecting said providing; said providing means being  
6 coupled with said control means; and  
7 (c) a link with said companion device for effecting said cooperation.

2. An apparatus for providing items of value in cooperation with operation of a companion device as recited in Claim 1 wherein said companion device includes a dispensing means; said providing means and said dispensing means cooperating to dispense said at least one item.

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3. An apparatus for providing items of value in cooperation with operation of a companion device as recited in Claim 1 wherein the apparatus further comprises:
- (d) a communication means coupled with said control means for communicating operational information with the apparatus regarding operation of the apparatus; and
- (e) a memory means coupled with said communication means for storing said operational information.

- 1 4. An apparatus for providing items of value in cooperation with operation of a  
2 companion device as recited in Claim 3 wherein said communication means  
3 comprises a telephone connection with a remote controlling station

- 1 5. An apparatus for providing items of value in cooperation with operation of a  
2 companion device as recited in Claim 3 wherein said communication means  
3 comprises an input access port for providing control access by an operator.

1 10. An apparatus for dispensing marketing materials in cooperation with operation of a  
2 companion vending machine as recited in Claim 9 wherein the apparatus further  
3 comprises:  
4 (d) a communication means coupled with the apparatus for communicating  
5 operational information with the apparatus regarding operation of the apparatus;  
6 and  
7 (e) a memory means coupled with said communication means for storing said  
8 operational information.

7 (c) a link with said companion device for effecting said cooperation.

7 (e) a memory means coupled with said communication means for storing said  
8 operational information.

1 14. An apparatus for providing items of value in cooperation with operation of a  
2 companion device as recited in Claims 10 or 12 wherein said communication means  
3 comprises an input access port for providing control access by an operator.

1 15. An apparatus for providing items of value in cooperation with operation of a  
2 companion device as recited in Claims 10 or 12 wherein said communication means  
3 comprises a satellite/communication connection with a remote controlling station.

0968-9724-2007-00000000

1 17. An apparatus for providing items of value in cooperation with operation of a  
2 companion device as recited in Claim 16 wherein said cable communication  
3 connection is communicatively coupled with said companion device.

1 19. A method for providing at least one item of value in cooperation with operation of a  
2 companion device as recited in Claim 18 wherein the method comprises the further  
3 step of:  
4 (d) providing a communication means coupled with the apparatus for communicating  
5 operational information with the apparatus regarding operation of the apparatus;  
6 and  
7 (e) providing a memory means coupled with said communication means for storing  
8 said operational information.

1 20. A method for providing at least one item of value in cooperation with operation of a  
2 companion device as recited in Claim 19 wherein the method comprises the further  
3 step of:

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